

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES RELATING TO
THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

As indicated in prior reports, the Democratic Party National Convention (DNC) is scheduled to open in Chicago, 26 August 1968, amidst an atmosphere of great uncertainty and apprehension. In addition to the normal high excitement and tension generated by a major party national political convention in a year in which, following the decision of the incumbent President of the United States not to seek reelection, there is the near frantic activity in behalf of a number of opposing candidates and groups with widely differing platform policy viewpoints, there is added the probable difficulties engendered by a threatened strike of both bus and taxi drivers and a continued strike against the Illinois Bell Telephone Co. which could result in a near communications blackout and has resulted in daily sabotage of communication lines through the severance of telephone cables. To all that, must be added the increasingly strong possibility of dangerous disorder and harassment arising from the vast amount of protest and propagandizing activity apparently intended by assorted groups with racial, peace, hippie, student, anti-administration, leftist, and rightist overtones.

In consequence of all this, extraordinary security measures beyond anything ever before devised for a political convention have already been planned and are being implemented. It is hoped that it will be possible to prevent disorder and violence in the galleries and on the convention hall floor as well as outside in the proximity of the hall and also in the general environs of the city itself.

Chicago Police Department (CPD) officials are meeting daily at the amphitheatre with agents of the Secret Service and the FBI on security precautions.

A CPD spokesman said that everyone going to the amphitheatre would be subjected to police checks for credentials at both an outer and inner perimeter in the vicinity of the convention hall. The size of the arena reportedly precludes any effort to admit the public to gallery seats. Only persons with credentials issued by the Democratic National Committee will be allowed to enter.

Some 1500 policemen, many of them detectives in plain clothes, will guard the area. Command Posts will be established inside and outside the arena. The entire 11,000-man CPD will be on twelve-hour shifts. National Guard troops will be on stand-by duty in Chicago armories every night of the convention week. About 800 will be on regularly scheduled drills each night. Plans provide for these troops to stop drilling near the arena and move into the streets if there are severe racial or anti-war disorders. Extended use will be made of all personnel of the Cook County Sheriff's

office. It is expected that certain units of the Regular Army will be on some degree of alert.

Police helicopters will fly constant surveillance over the five-mile route from downtown hotels to the meeting hall. Part of a parking lot at the amphitheatre will serve as a helicopter landing pad. Policemen with long-range weapons will be stationed on rooftops in the amphitheatre area.

Livestock shippers and traders who work at the stockyards will be subjected to the same scrutiny as convention-goers. Even manhole covers are to be sealed. The surveillance will extend to the city's three airports and bus and railroad terminals so that authorities can be alerted to the arrival of possible troublemakers. Eight thousand more canisters of the disabling chemical MACE are to be delivered to the CPD this week. A 2,136-foot long chain-link fence topped by barbed wire has been erected on the west side of the amphitheatre. A vast 8 block-wide area of stockyards, now mostly empty, stretches to the west from the fence, providing a buffer zone. Other security measures, similar to the plan used at the RNC will be in effect.

CPD officials are making plans to house 1500 prisoners in the yard of the Cook County jail in the event of mass arrests during the DNC. Sufficient tents and outdoor toilet facilities have been arranged for. Approximately 1500 additional prisoners could be squeezed into the county jail and the city's house of correction by over-crowding them. In addition it has been contemplated that dressing rooms at Soldiers Field might be used as makeshift jail facilities. The undersheriff of Cook County stated that, "If we believe 1/3 of the rumors we are hearing, we are in for a lot of trouble."

Anti-war, anti-administration groups planning a protest march past the amphitheatre charge that the show of force is designed to intimidate dissenters.

On 13 August Senator McCarthy told his supporters in a Los Angeles speech that he did not desire them to conduct demonstrations at the DNC in Chicago for fear of "unintended violence or disorder." Any rallies in his behalf should be held in the hometowns of the demonstrators, he said. "The presence of large numbers of visitors amidst summer tensions of Chicago may well add to the possibility of unintended violence or disorder," Senator McCarthy stated. McCarthy's campaign office seconded the Senator's plea. An assistant said, "The police and Secret Service are very tense. In an atmosphere like this it is very likely that there will be some disorder. We don't want any of the Senator's backers to be hurt or arrested in Chicago."

Opponents to the Vietnam War predict 30,000 to 40,000 protesters may come to Chicago during the convention and various groups of hippies, yippies, students, and black militants could swell the influx of dissidents to 100,000 according to some estimates. Chicago already has a considerable hard core of hoodlums, lawless, and other potential troublemakers.

George "Watasi" Lord - former "War Lord" of the Blackstone Rangers, a large organized street gang of colored youth in Chicago, advised in

recent hearings conducted by the United States Senate Committee on Government Operations, that it was understood in the ghetto that various groups were going to concentrate around the convention area and that it would "take but one spark to start a big thing out there" - that there are a couple of guys in the Nationalist organizations who are very willing to go to jail just to start that and that there are people who are just waiting for an excuse to start something. He further testified that the youth gangs are well armed and even have some grenades.

SCLC leaders, after expressing strong dissatisfaction with the RNC choice of Nixon/Agnew, are turning their attention toward the DNC hoping to influence the delegates to nominate a man willing to fight to translate the goals of "Resurrection City" into positive action. In Chicago, the Poor People's campaigners will find it easy to turn out thousands whereas in Miami Beach where there are few Negroes it was necessary to import campaigners. It is probable that Rev. Abernathy and other SCLC leaders will be less reluctant to indulge in demonstrations stimulating mass arrests as to have done so in Miami might have put them in jail and forced them to miss the DNC. Abernathy has stated that they intend "to be heard" but "without being disruptive." Some SCLC leaders, notably Hosea Williams, reportedly desire more aggressive action than that taken at the RNC. He told a meeting of the National Coalition for an Open Convention on 11 August that positive demonstrations are necessary but they must be nonviolent. He said he wouldn't mind a blood bath "but that a violent demonstration would give ~~the streets~~ ^{the streets} a free pass to the White House." Although SCLC is not expected to endorse anyone, Williams said he would be working on his own for McCarthy.

The National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (NMCEWV), is sponsoring demonstrations throughout the DNC period. At a committee meeting held 11 August in Chicago, Ronnie Davis, the committee's Chicago coordinator and a member of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and chaired by Davis, he urged that housing be found for out-of-town demonstrators coming to Chicago. The committee is to begin training on 20 August of marshals for the demonstrations. He said the committee needs doctors and electronics experts for the DNC.

The Washington, D. C., NMCEWV reputedly is arranging for busses to carry local demonstrators to the DNC and housing is to be arranged by the Chicago Peace Council, a group which has been active against the Vietnam War. No firm bussing plans have been made yet. Helen Gurewitz, a former CP member, on 5 August told the Washington NMCEWV that the National Mobilization Committee did not want racial trouble at the DNC so would not attempt disruptive tactics. At least one busload of demonstrators from D. C. was asked for by the National Committee.

David Dellinger, NMCEWV leader, has requested that all participants report to the 40 or 50 movement centers to be designated in Chicago. Three major centers are planned for Lincoln, Grant, and Hyde Parks. It should be noted that various groups have expressed interest in utilizing Chicago's parks although, to date, apparently none has received official sanction from the authorities. Tentatively planned to date by NMCEWV are:

- 24 August 1968 - Small demonstrations at induction centers, federal buildings, colleges and other targets to be selected.
- 25 August 1968 - Demonstrations at hotels housing delegates with the intent of testing the firmness of the Chicago Police Department.
- 26 August 1968 - A rally at Grant Park.
- 27 August 1968 - A demonstration birthday party for President L. B. Johnson at Soldiers Field. There are rumors that the city of Chicago plans to use Soldiers Field for a birthday party for the President that day.
- 28 August 1968 - A massive march through Chicago to the convention site where picket lines will be formed. Participants may engage in civil disobedience if they so desire.
- 29 August 1968 - Demonstrations at the three major movement centers. Afternoon demonstrations at induction centers, federal buildings, and at CPD headquarters.

Reputedly the NMCEWV, which includes members of the CP, may initiate "crash-ins" utilizing several thousand demonstrators who would be stationed at the corners of the convention building for the purpose of a direct confrontation with the CPD.

The NMCEWV has now initiated first aid training for individuals who will act as marshals.

The Resistance - a militant anti-draft group, will take part in the planned 28 August massive demonstration. Some may engage in civil disobedience designed to disrupt the convention.

The 5th Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade - Committee plus a coalition of some 100 anti-draft groups plan to demonstrate at the DNC. Presumably this is the same activity that is being sponsored by the NMCEWV.

The Radical Organizing Committee (ROC), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, plans to participate in the DNC demonstrations. They have been in contact with the NMCEWV. ROC members plan to be in Chicago 17 August - 28 August to participate. This is the militant group that broke away from the Student Mobilization Committee. It has issued and is distributing a leaflet entitled, "Rock Chicago." It calls for demonstrations against the "warmongers" at the DNC. It calls for much the same schedule of demonstrations as those sponsored by the NMCEWV and is probably a joint participation.

The Veterans for Peace in Vietnam, Chicago, which was organized by the CP is mailing leaflets to various anti-war groups urging participation in the DNC demonstrations. The leaflet suggests that veterans who oppose the war take part in the Demonstrations by: marching into newspaper offices, television and radio stations, distributing leaflets, and marching on the platform committee hearings. It is inviting retired military personnel to testify

at the platform hearings.

The Free Survival Committee - a hippie group - hopes to bring 50,000 youths to the city for a pop-music festival and "unconvention." They say they will live in the parks but have not received permission for the camp-in.

The Brotherhood of Free Man (another militant "hippie" type of organization) reputedly may demonstrate at the DNC.

Some members of the Young Socialist Alliance, Washington, D. C., the youth group of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), have indicated that they want to participate in the demonstration.

Youth International Party (Yip or Yippies), a conglomerate group of hippies and others of the same ilk, plans to hold disruptive action in a week long "Life Festival" in Chicago during the DNC. The Yippies include an extremely loosely organized group of sexual freedom advocates, folk singers, protestors of all sorts, and various young anti-establishment agitators. Reportedly they plan to organize a self-defense group including members of the militant Black Panther Party (BPP). Eldridge Cleaver of the BPP has asked Jerry Rubin, Yippie leader, to run for vice president on the Peace and Freedom party ticket. Cleaver is a candidate for the Presidential nomination. The idea is to give the "Life Festival" the flavor of a political convention. YIP intends to hold a mock election at Lincoln Park. Reportedly it will nominate a pig for President of the United States of America--then butcher it and eat it. YIP has also announced a "love-in" for Lincoln Park whether or not the city authorizes sleeping there for a week or not. YIP will join the MMCEW mass march planned for the 28th.

The New Left is hoping for some 50,000 demonstrators at the DNC. Current plans call for two circles of demonstrators around the convention area to shut off all entrances to the convention hall.

The New York Student Rally Committee indicated that a coalition of McCarthy supporters, peace, freedom and anti-administration forces is seeking to rally 100,000 students to go to Chicago for the DNC. Chartered buses are scheduled to leave New York 25 August. Churches and sympathizers are being asked to provide free sleeping accommodations. Bus tickets are being sold at the Headquarters of the Radical Organizing Committee and of the 5th Avenue Vietnam Peace Committee in New York.

The Coalition for an Open Convention - organized by Allard Lowenstein - states it will stage a rally on 25 August - Convention Eve - at Soldiers Field. To date Chicago officials have not granted them permission to use the 100,000 seat field.

The Engelwood Ministerial Association - a group of Negro Protestant Ministers, has agreed to call for demonstrators who will lie in the streets around the convention site in order to block all vehicular traffic. A date

has not been set.

Rumor is circulating on the campus of Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio, to the effect that groups planning to disrupt the DNC are obtaining counterfeit admission tickets to the convention. According to the rumor, demonstrators will be furnished with these tickets in order to load the visitors gallery for disruptive purposes.

Ramparts Magazine has indicated it will publish a newspaper in Chicago during the DNC and list the schedule of demonstrations.

[REDACTED] an official of SDS at the University of Oregon, and his girl friend, [REDACTED] are reported planning to attend the DNC where [REDACTED] will be a page. He reportedly has suicidal tendencies, is in need of psychiatric care, and is capable of committing violence. [REDACTED] is a former member of the CP.

The Dow Action Committee of Los Angeles, which was formed to protest manufacture of napalm, plans to send a small delegation to the Dow Chemical Company during the DNC.

Donald Kalish, University of California Philosophy Department head and a leader in the Peace Action Council, has stated that he will leave Los Angeles for Chicago on 23 August to participate in demonstrations.

Members of two Negro Youth gangs - the "Jackson Executioners" and the "Soul Brothers" reputedly plan to shoot an individual (unidentified) at the DNC. The source is an FBI informant who has proved reliable in the past. Reportedly they have also advised ghetto residents that they had better stock up on groceries as grocery stores will be burned out.

The Cuba Group (AKA: Committee of Fifteen, etc.) a Cuban exile organization anti-Castro, plans to organize an automobile caravan from Miami and other cities to demonstrate at the DNC.

The District of Columbia's Democratic National Convention delegates plan to nominate Rev. Channing E. Phillips for President as a favorite-son candidate on the first ballot. Philip M. Stern, alternate National Committeeman-elect, will deliver the nominating speech for Phillips, who is the National Committeeman-elect and delegation chairman. The delegates, elected 7 May on a ticket pledged to Senator Robert F. Kennedy, are now uncommitted beyond the first ballot. Phillips, a member of the D. C.'s controversial Black United Front, is generally considered a moderate among local black militants.

The foregoing does not purport to be a complete listing of groups, individuals and activities surfaced to date through various sources. It is more or less supplemental to the 36-page report issued at Chicago, Illinois, 15 July 1968 by the FBI and captioned, "Demonstrations at the National Democratic Convention, August 1968."

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SOURCES: Government and public news media reports.

RELIABILITY: Probably exaggerated but generally true in principle.